

# Victory in the Civil War

Measuring the Victory of the Union, 1861 - 2017





## Appomattox Court House, April 1865

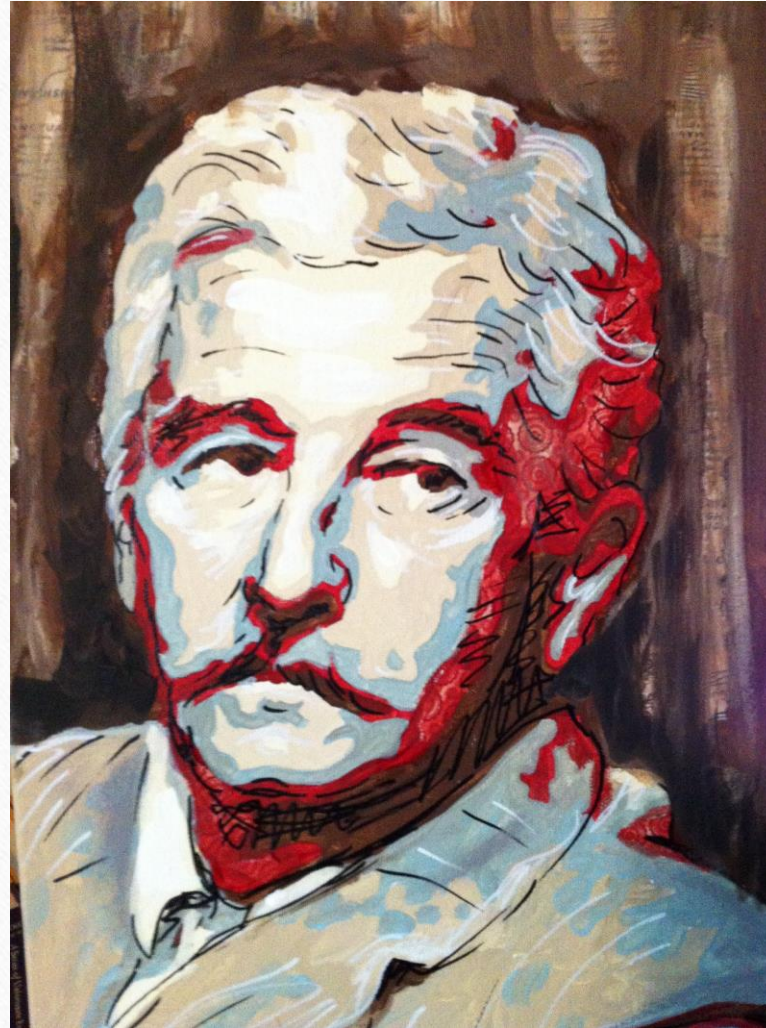
In April of 1865, Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee met to discuss surrender terms. After their meeting the Civil War came abruptly to a close. The Union had won the war and the Reconstruction process now began. For their parts, Grant and the Union extended generous terms of surrender, and Lee encouraged his men to return to their homes and be good citizens. Yet, rebuilding the former Confederacy – both physically and socially – would be a long, difficult, and complicated process. In 1865, the goals of the Union were only partially accomplished. How would this change over time?



*“The Past is not dead. It’s not  
even in the past.”*  
- William Faulkner

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The Civil War had a clear outcome in terms of the rival armies and military conflict. And yet, many years afterwards, the idea of the “Lost Cause” of the Confederacy still provokes strong feelings of patriotism and devotion to the failed nation. In many ways, Americans still grapple with some of the issues which caused the Civil War in the first place. Although slavery has been extinguished, issues of states rights, federalism, and racial equality are still very important to our society. And the outcome of the Civil War did not provide a solution to these points of conflict.





# What were the goals of the Union at the start of the Civil War? How did they change?

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- Abraham Lincoln and the Union's primary goal in the Civil War was to restore the Union. Lincoln believed that secession was illegal and that it would undermine the future of democratic government. So he called upon soldiers to defeat the Confederacy and bring the southern states back into the Union.
- Ending slavery was a second goal of the Union, but that goal was not articulated until after the Battle of Antietam in 1862, and it was not acted upon until the Emancipation Proclamation was issued in 1863. Even then, slavery remained legal in the northern states and parts of the South. Slavery did not truly end until the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1865.



## Rearticulating the Goals of Union

When we measure the success or failure of the Union over the course of time, we have to change the questions slightly. When it comes to the issue of secession, all is resolved. States cannot secede. But whether or not states accept and follow federal laws has often been in question. Consider the integration of public schools in the 1950s, which required President Eisenhower to order an armed invasion of Arkansas in order to allow nine African-American Students to attend Central High School...

Sometimes, the federal government abdicates its responsibility to enforce, the law, as well. For example, consider the current debate over marijuana legalization.



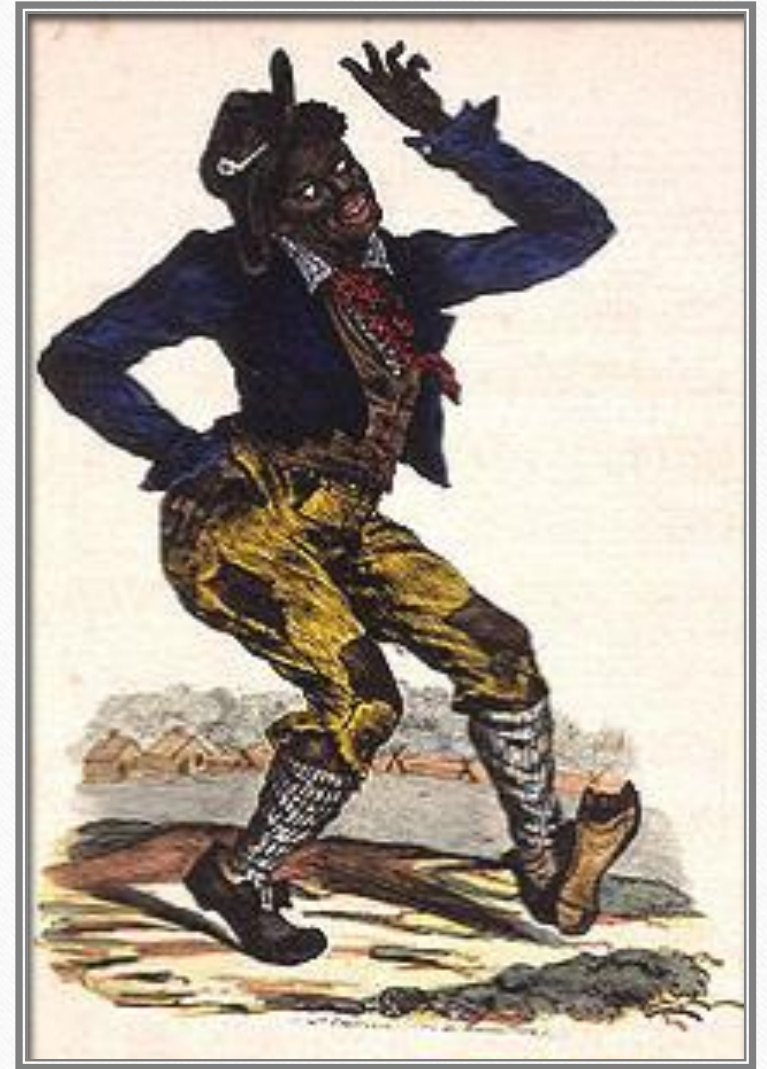


## Rearticulating the Goals of Union

Similarly, ending slavery was not the only goal of the Union once the Civil War came to an end. Equality under the law and suffrage rights for African-Americans were equally important to the success of the Union's goals by the end of Reconstruction.

Southern states attempted to circumvent every aspect of these goals – creating “black codes” and convict labor laws to reinstituted “slavery by another name,” the “Jim Crow” system of segregation in the South, and literacy tests, poll taxes, and grandfather clauses to prevent African-American men from voting – while preserving white supremacists power to control elections.

While Southern states openly violated the rights of African-Americans, the goals of the Reconstruction were not being redeemed.





## Winning the War, Winning the Reconstruction.

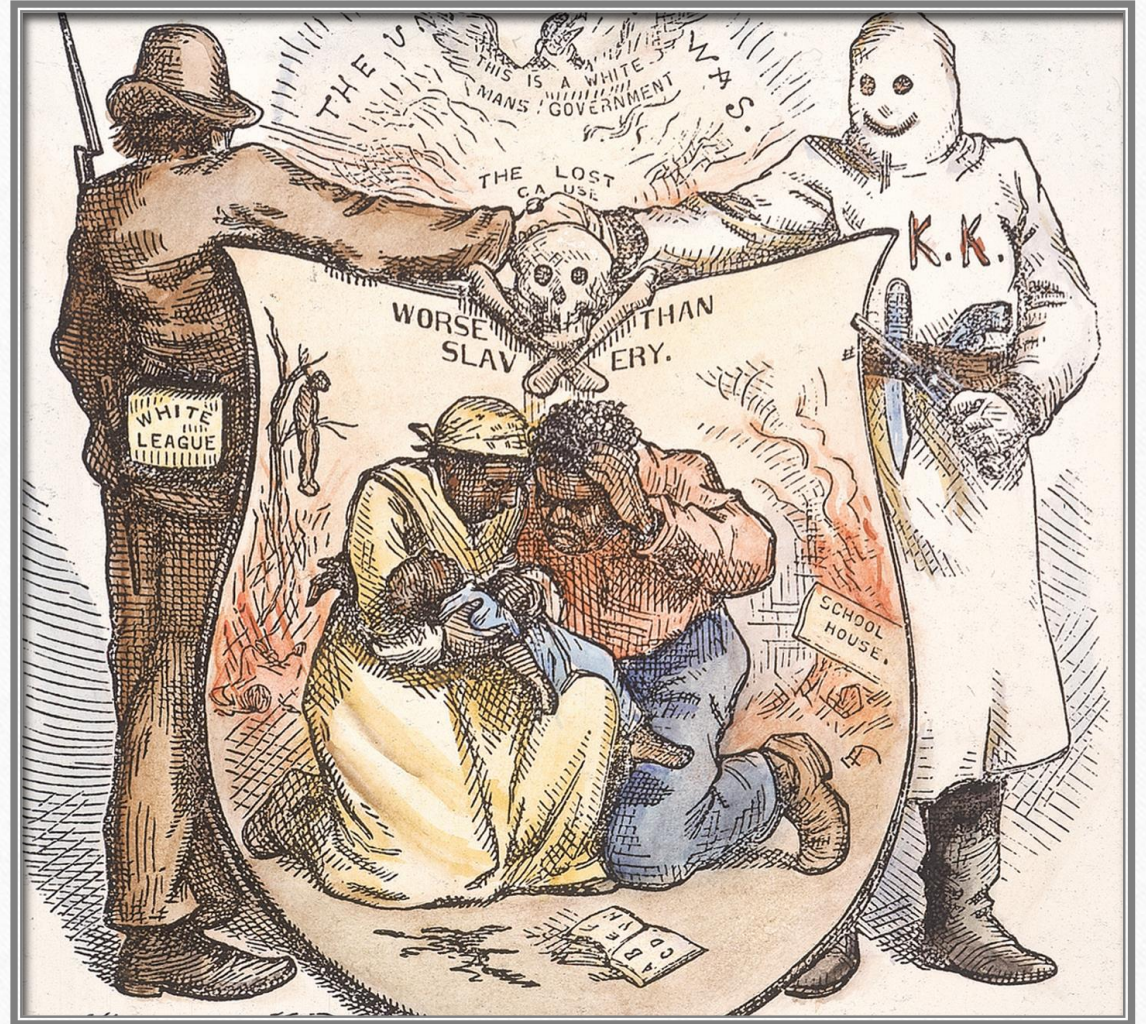
If the Union won the Civil War, then why and how did the “states rights” philosophy and racist segregation persist? (One obvious answer: The 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment!)

Was the federal government sovereign? If so, in what capacity?

Was the Constitution the law of the land?

Had slavery been eliminated? Or had it been replaced by another system of subjugation?

Had African-Americans achieved equal protection under the law, as the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment promised?





# The Reconstruction Period

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## Union Victory, 1861 - 1865

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In April of 1865, it would be hard to argue that the Union was not completely victorious. The Confederate Army was destroyed – even if some small remnants of the Army still lingered under the command of Joseph Johnston. The Southern economy was ruined. Southern states were physically destroyed: cities like Atlanta and Richmond had been razed. And close to a quarter of the men between the ages of 16 and 40 were dead. The Confederacy lost.





# *Lincoln's Assassination and the Rise of the Radical Republicans in Congress*

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The assassination of Abraham Lincoln changed everything. His 10% Plan for Reconstruction was probably the most generous plan the former Confederate states could ever hope to get passed through Congress. Now, Radical Republicans – intent upon punishing the South and demanding immediate equality for African-Americans – would direct the Reconstruction process, and expand the goals of the Union.

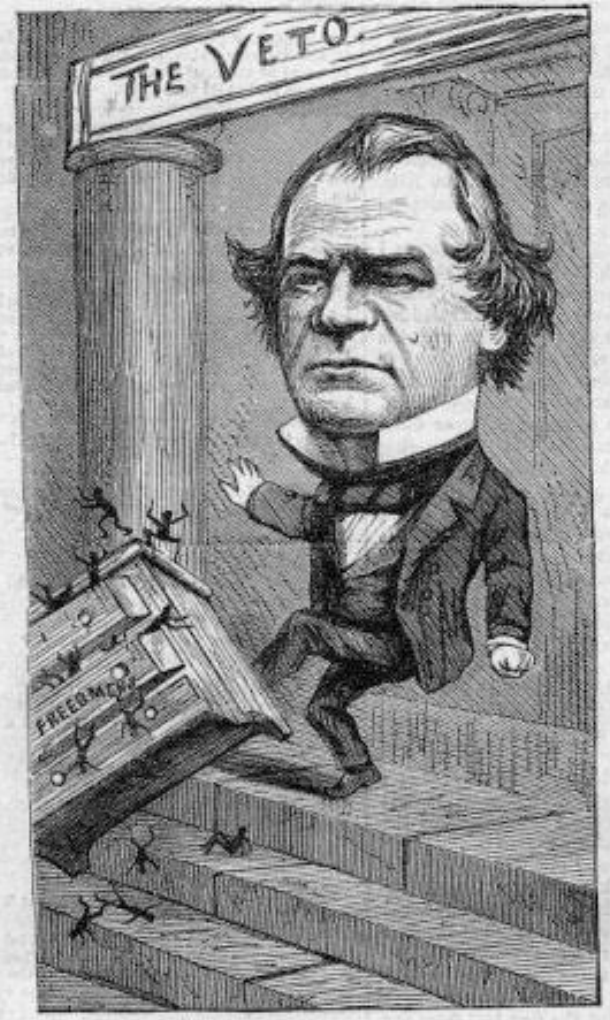




## *President Andrew Johnson may well have been the most hated President in American History.*

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Lincoln had selected Johnson as his Vice President in 1864 because he had been the only Southern Senator to remain loyal to the Union in 1861. (Hannibal Hamlin had been the Vice President during his first term in office.) He was not even from Lincoln's party; Johnson was a Southerner and a Democrat. Lincoln had picked him to show that Northerners and Southerners must be able to compromise and reconcile. Now, with Lincoln's assassination, he was President. He opposed almost every goal of the Radical Republicans in Congress, and he vetoed both the extension of the Freedman's Bureau and the Civil Rights Act of 1866. Not only did the Radical Republicans override his vetoes, they also **impeached** him! Johnson came within a single vote of being removed from office!

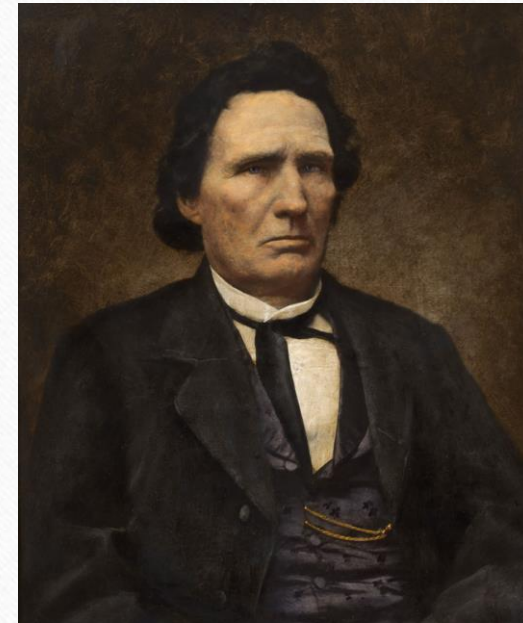




# The Rise of the Radical Republicans

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- Politics is a game in which the goalposts are constantly moving. For Radical Republicans, Lincoln's assassination – his martyrdom – changed their perspective on events. To honor Lincoln's memory and to punish the Confederate scoundrels that had murdered him, they expanded their goals for Reconstruction. And now, they had the full support of the Union to make changes to the nation's social contract. Leaders like Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Charles Sumner from Massachusetts were completely uncompromising.



Rep. Thaddeus Stevens (R-PA)



# Radical Republican Goals

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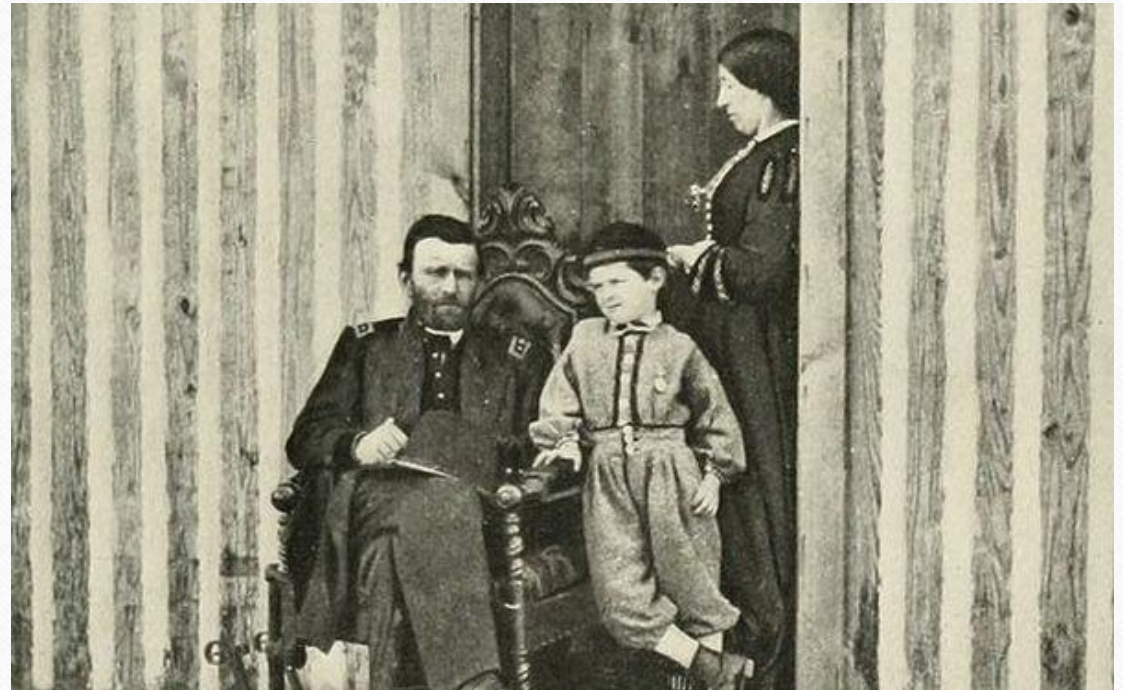
- The Military Reconstruction of the former Confederacy. The Confederacy was divided into five military districts and physically occupied by the Union Army.
- The passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment ending slavery.
- The passage of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, granting citizenship rights to African Americans regardless of previous condition of servitude.
- The passage of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, granting African American men suffrage rights.
- The creation of the Freedman's Bureau, to assist African-Americans in wage negotiations, the establishment of Freedman's Bureau schools, and the acquisition of land and homes.
- African-Americans were elected to the House of Representatives and the US Senate.



# President Grant and Radical Reconstruction

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- Although he is frequently criticized as an alcoholic and a corrupt administrator, most of the accusations against Grant are brought forth by spiteful Southern historians.
- Grant was a true believer in the goals of the Civil War, and supported the Radicals goals. He provided support for the Freedman's Bureau and fought against the Ku Klux Klan. While he was in office, the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave African-American men the right to vote.





# 1870: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 1870. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.



# The Reconstruction Comes to an End

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- During Ulysses S. Grant's Presidency, bringing the nation back together was a major priority. Showing respect for both sides dedication and bravery was important, even if Grant considered the Confederacy's one of the worst causes ever fought for.
- Cooperation in settling the West played a key role in bringing the nation back together as a whole. The Homestead Act was passed to help settle the interior Great Plains states.
- In May of 1869, the Transcontinental Railroad was completed – and both Northerners and Southerners had played a role in building it.
- Wars against Native Americans were fought to confine the once nomadic tribes to reservations, dispossessing them of their land. Collectively, Northerners and Southerners cooperated to control the West.



# May 10, 1869: The Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, Promontory Point, UT

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The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad was an amazing feat of engineering, but it was also a testament to the working man and the power of cooperation. It was built in two parts: the Central Pacific from Sacramento to the east using mostly Chinese laborers, while the Union Pacific built from Omaha heading west. Many of the men working were former soldiers of the Blue and the Gray, and Irish immigrants and free blacks joined them.



# June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1876: Custer's Last Stand



Custer's Last Stand, or the Battle of Little Bighorn, took place in the summer of 1876. Custer and the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry had been sent west to force the Sioux tribe back on its reservation lands in the Dakota Territory. He and his 250 men attacked a group of Native Americans which numbered well over 10,000. Every last man was slain. Although it was one of the greatest victories for Native Americans ever in military terms, it also provoked a response from Americans which was overwhelming.



# July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1876: Our Centennial Year

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While it is impossible to say how much the Centennial year influenced the way Americans felt at the time, it is likely that both Northerners and Southerners sought to get past their differences and reconcile during this extremely patriotic moment in American History. The easiest manner in which to do this was to focus on things they agreed on – and avoid conflicts over their past. To a large extent, during this period, Americans focused on their common animosity towards Indians and “compromised” over their commitment to equality for African-Americans.



# The Disputed Election of 1876 - 1877

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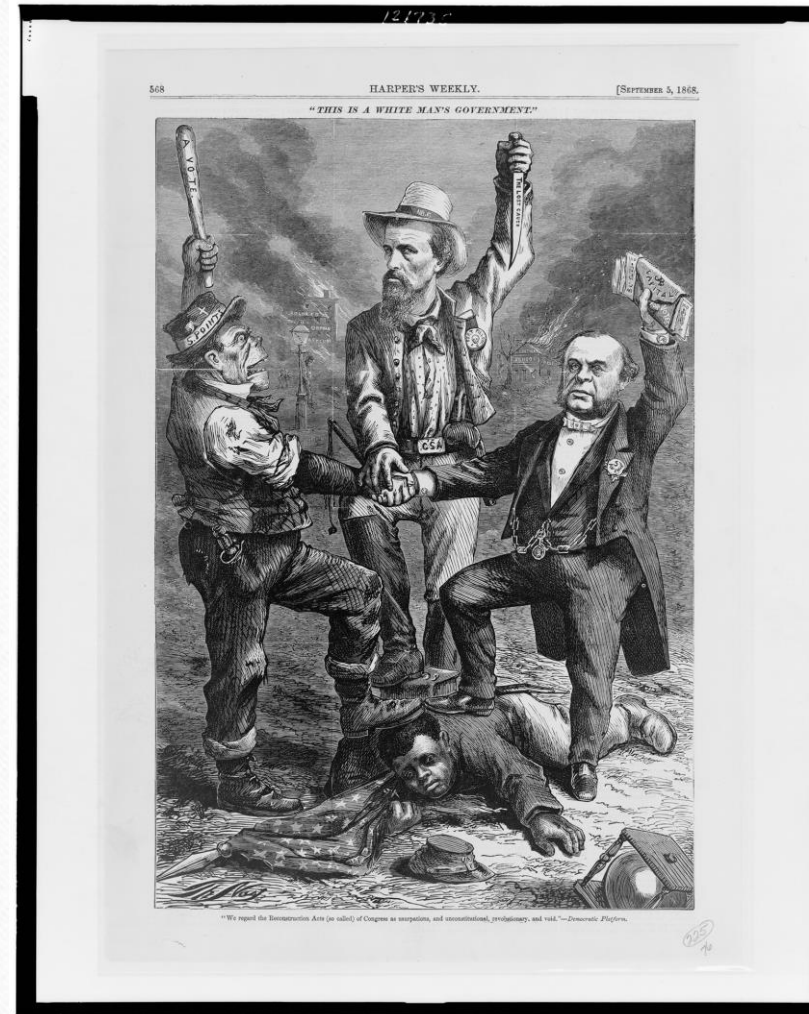
- In 1877, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes ran for President of the United States against the Democrat Samuel Tilden.
- Tilden won the popular vote, and appeared to have won the Electoral College as well, but disputed elections in several states caused many to doubt the veracity of the results. Hate groups had attempted to intimidate voters in some states, and the practice of intimidating potential voters by threatening them was used by both Republicans and Democrats.
- Because the result of the Election was not clear, Congress made a deal.



# *The Compromise of 1877*

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In the Compromise of 1877, Democrats agreed to allow Rutherford B. Hayes to collect all of the Electoral College votes remaining and take the office of the Presidency. But he had to agree to something in exchange. Hayes withdrew all Union soldiers from the South, ending the military occupation of the states and removing the most important guardians of African-American rights. White supremacists would very quickly be elected to positions of power in most of the former Confederacy.





# 1877: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 1877. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.



# Equality on Paper, 1877 - 1896

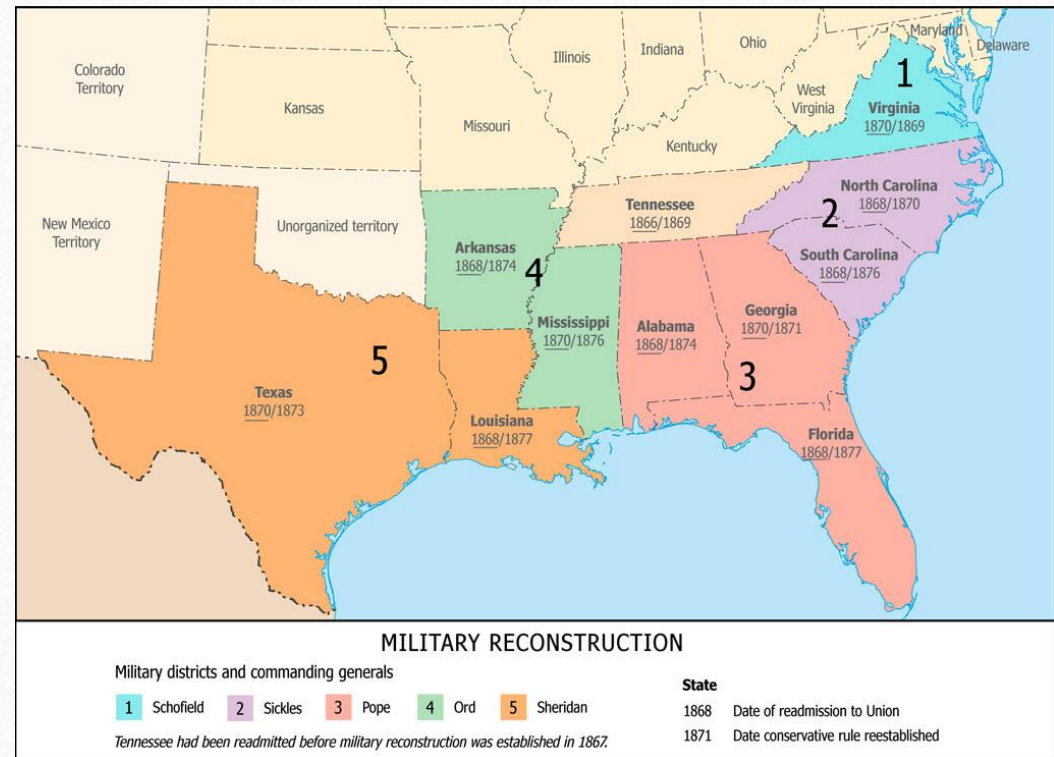
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- When the military occupation of the South came to an end in 1877, progress towards equality came to an abrupt end. Between 1881 and 1967, not a single African –American was elected to the United States Senate.
- The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment outlawed slavery, but job discrimination and black codes made it difficult for African-Americans to gain economic equality.
- The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment granted citizenship rights, but equal protection under the law was impossible in a segregated South.
- The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment granted African-American men the right to vote. Yet, racially motivated threats, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, and poll taxes prevented most African-American men from exercising that right.
- In 1896, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation was legal as long as the institutions created were “separate but equal.” Public transportation, public buildings, schools, and neighborhoods were all legally separated at that time. Segregation was upheld in both the South and the North!



# Military Reconstruction Ends

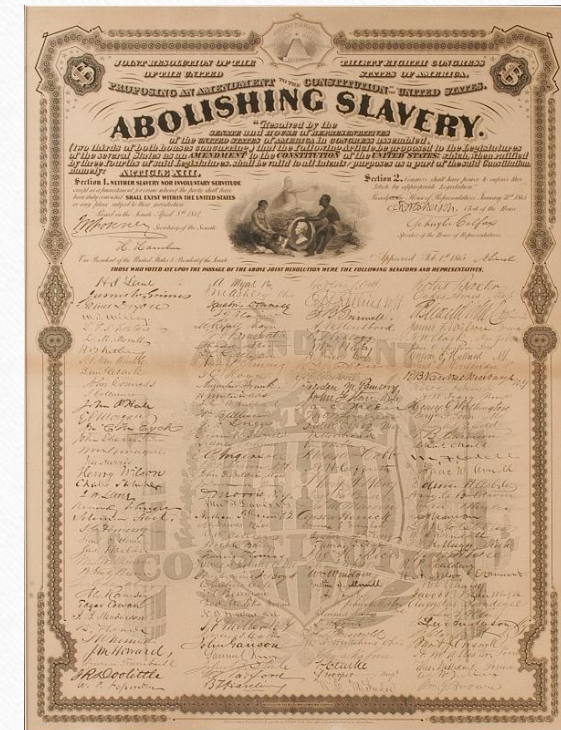
- As a result of the Compromise of 1877, all Union soldiers left the South, and moved to the West, where they began a series of campaigns against Indians known as the Plains Wars.
- Enforcement of civil rights legislation ceased.
- “Jim Crow” laws and segregation began in most Southern States.





# 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment - Revisited

- While the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment still existed on paper, its effectiveness was greatly reduced.
- Black codes allowed Southern towns to arrest unemployed or idle African-Americans and sentence them to jail time or hard labor – on local farms or plantations. The convict labor system that emerged in the South meant that a man arrested for a charge such as “vagrancy” might spend the rest of his life in prison or doing hard labor for a mining company.
- Sharecropping reduced many free African-Americans to peonage, and racist hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan used violence to prevent blacks from organizing against unfair employers.





# 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment - Revisited

- The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment should have provided equal protection under the law and civil rights for all African-Americans. But when the Union soldiers abandoned the South, racism, discrimination, segregation, and unfair hiring practices resumed immediately. The national government rarely intervened to protect African-American citizens.





# 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment - Revisited

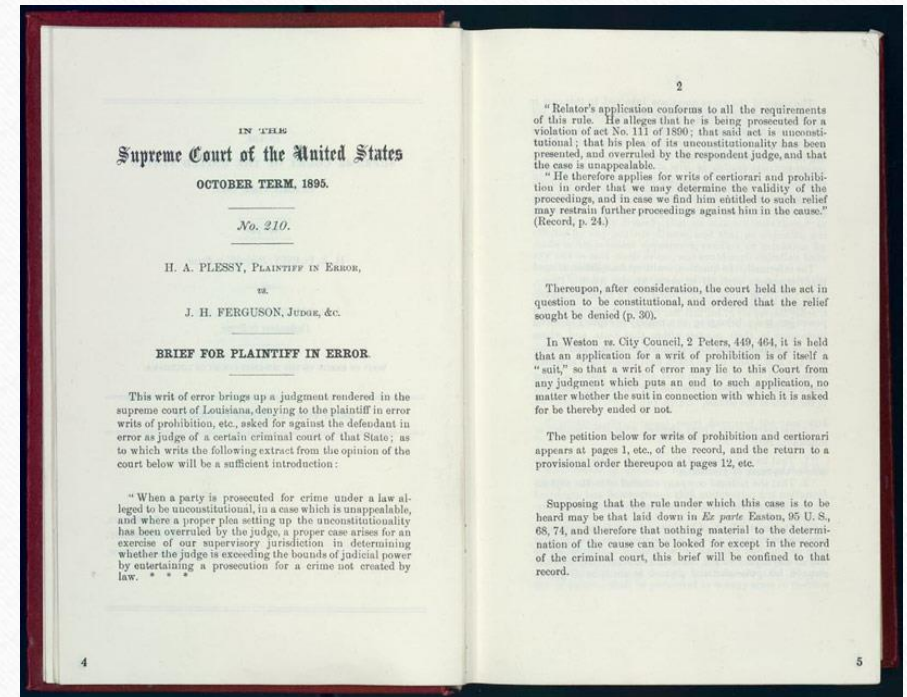
- In order to prevent African-American men from voting in elections, a variety of unfair practices were started.
- Poll taxes were charged to vote.
- Literacy tests were administered, and most African-Americans did not pass the tests whether they could read or not.
- Grandfather clauses exempted white voters from both the literacy tests and the poll tax.
- Violence was threatened against black candidates and black voters.
- In many southern counties, the percentage of eligible African-American men registered to vote was below 5%. And this persisted until the 1960s in some places.





# The Case of *Plessy V. Ferguson* (1896)

- In 1896, Homer Plessy sued a railroad company for discrimination. They had kicked him out of a first class seat on the train he was riding because he was black. (Ironically, most people thought he was white! Plessy had an African-American grandfather, but he was generally considered a white man – he “passed” as white to use the parlance of the day. The SCOTUS ruled that while Plessy should not have been removed from his seat, it was only because separate but equal accommodations were not available for African-American travelers. In other words, separation was legal as long as the institutions were “separate but equal.” This ruling would be used justify “Jim Crow” laws and segregation for the next 58 years.





# 1896: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 1896. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.



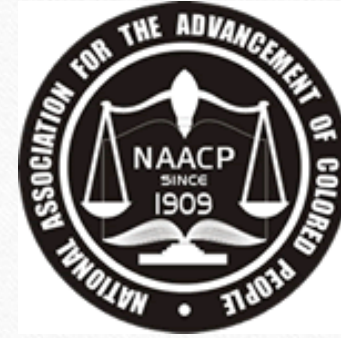
# The Failures of Progressive Reform, 1896 -1945

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From 1896 – 1945, African-Americans struggles through a period which is sometimes referred to as the nadir of the movement for Civil Rights. Despite the efforts of progressives like Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and Ida Tarbell, enormous problems persisted and grew worse: lynching, a lack of economic opportunity, poor access to education, the rise of “Jim Crow” and segregation, and voter disenfranchisement continued. Woodrow Wilson re-segregated Washington, D.C. during his time in office. The Ku Klux Klan rose to great prominence, attracting close to 5 Million members in the 1920s. The Great Depression influenced African-Americans disproportionately and negatively. Most of the New Deal programs designed to help didn’t reach African-Americans Communities. And despite protests from his wife Eleanor, FDR failed to enact any meaningful anti-lynching laws..



# NAACP – Established 1909



In 1909, after a horrifying race riot in Abraham Lincoln's hometown of Springfield, IL, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was established to promote equality – immediate social, political, and economic equality, for all African-Americans. One of the most important founders was W.E.B. DuBois, who encouraged African-Americans to sue for equality in education and in economic affairs.

The NAACP Legal Fund became an important sponsor of legal challenges on behalf of African-Americans who were discriminated against.

The NAACP also publicized the lynching of African-Americans in the South, crimes which often went unpunished, by flying flags like the one to the right: "A Man Was Lynched Yesterday."





# The Lynching of African Americans

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Ghastly and inhumane crimes were committed against African-American men during this period of American history. It was not uncommon for whites to have their pictures made after murdering a man – by hanging or other, more torturous methods. Because juries were all white and African-Americans were either forbidden or afraid to testify against whites, these crimes went unpunished in many Southern towns. Although many spoke out against lynchings – the NAACP, Ida B. Wells, Eleanor Roosevelt, for example – no national anti-lynching laws were passed until World War II.





# The Lynching of African Americans

For African-Americans living in the South, speaking out against lynching could be a dangerous tactic. Even long established leaders in the South like Booker T. Washington parsed his words on the subject at times.

The fearlessness of whites in carrying out a lynching was reinforced by the fact that no one would be convicted of crimes.

The lesson was even taught to children. In the photograph to the right, note the small children who have been brought out to see the murder of this man. One girl is smiling in the background, fascinated by the sight. These children are being taught to hate – and taught that murder by lynching was acceptable behavior.

Since the federal government did not have the courage to intervene, these violent hate crimes persisted for centuries.



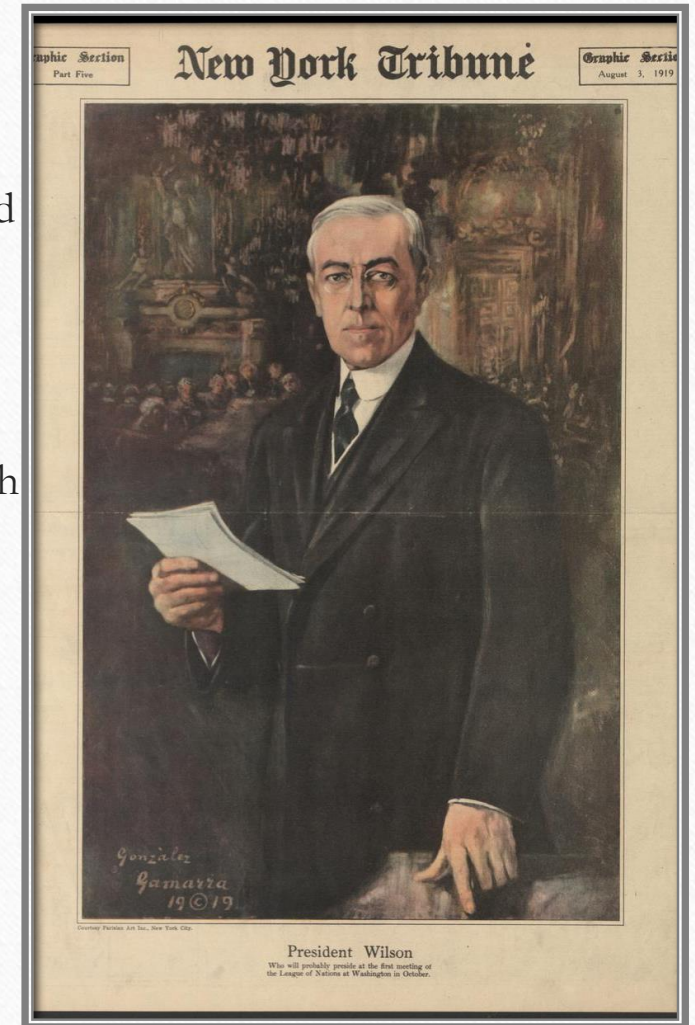


## *President Woodrow Wilson: One Step Back for Civil Rights in the United States of America*

Woodrow Wilson was one of our nation's most important Presidents, and he changed our nation's role in world affairs quite dramatically by plunging the nation into war in 1917 – intervening in World War I.

He was considered a progressive President – helping to change the banking industry with the Federal Reserve Act, and enforcing anti-trust legislation to protect consumers and workers. He even supported women gaining the right to vote – which was achieved during his Presidency when the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified.

But Wilson's major failure as President was with regards to Civil Rights. Wilson segregated the White House and much of Washington, D.C. while he was in office – places which had previously been integrated! He allowed African-American soldiers to serve under foreign commanders (the French) during World War I. He even arranged a special showing of the racist mega-film *The Birth of A Nation* – D.W. Griffith's film which was based on an extraordinarily racist novel *The Clansman*, written by Wilson's good friend Thomas Dixon. He raved about the virtues of the movie – in which members of the Ku Klux Klan are portrayed as heroes, who prevented wild-eyed free blacks from assaulting white women after the Civil War.







D.W. Griffith's "The Birth of A Nation," based on the novel *The Clansman*.

This film was a blockbuster in 1915 when it was released. D.W. Griffith's racist film is very, very different from the upcoming film by director Nate Parker. His film, also titled *The Birth of a Nation*, revolves around the life of Nat Turner.



## *The Segregated Service of African-American Soldiers in World War I*

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Well over 300,000 African Americans joined the United States Armed services during World War I, and most would serve overseas in one capacity or another. Often, the military would not allow black soldiers to fight on the front lines, but left them in supply lines or support roles. When over 200,000 Black soldiers arrived in France as part of the 92<sup>nd</sup> and 93<sup>rd</sup> Divisions – segregated units – the United States government was not certain how to put the men to work. Finally, they decided – for the first time and perhaps the only time in American history – to assign black soldiers to serve *under French commanders*.



**The 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry Unit of New York, better known as the “Harlem Hell-Fighters.” They never lost an inch of ground to the Germans, and two members of the group won the “Croix de Guerre.” one of France’s highest honors.**



# The Great Migration

The Great Migration is the term we use to refer to the movement of African-American people to northern industrial cities between 1915 and 1930. Most of the time African-Americans moved to the north for job opportunities. Although there were certain advantages to moving to the north, for example – less overt and violent racism – jobs were often low paying, and segregation was still rampant. The population of northern cities grew quickly, but often, the neighborhoods remained segregated and life was difficult.





# The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921

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The race riot which destroyed the Greenwood Section of Tulsa, Oklahoma is the bloodiest single episode of racial violence in American history, but it was certainly not the only one. Riots occurred in Springfield, Atlanta, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. in the same period. In Tulsa, close to three hundred men and women perished during the violence –most of them African-American, but dozens of whites, as well – when a simple incident between two teenagers exploded into days of racially motivated rioting and destruction. The incident began when a group of African-American men and World War I soldiers intervened to prevent a lynch mob from killing a teenage boy who had been accused of assaulting a white girl.





# The African-American Experience During the Great Depression, 1929 - 1941

During the Great Depression, unemployment in America reached 25%, and many people were homeless. But African-American people were hit especially hard by the Depression. Many African-Americans looked for work in large cities – both north and south. Here, the number of unemployed African-Americans came close to 50%.

“In southern cities, white workers rallied around such slogans as, “No Jobs for Niggers Until Every White Man Has a Job” and “Niggers, back to the cotton fields—city jobs are for white folks.” The most violent episodes took place on southern railroads, as unionized white workers and the railroad brotherhoods intimidated, attacked, and murdered black firemen in order to take their jobs. Nearly a dozen black firemen lost their jobs in various parts of the South. As one contemporary observer succinctly stated, “The shotgun, the whip, the noose, and Ku Klux Klan practices were being resumed in the certainty that dead men not only tell no tales, but create vacancies.”\*



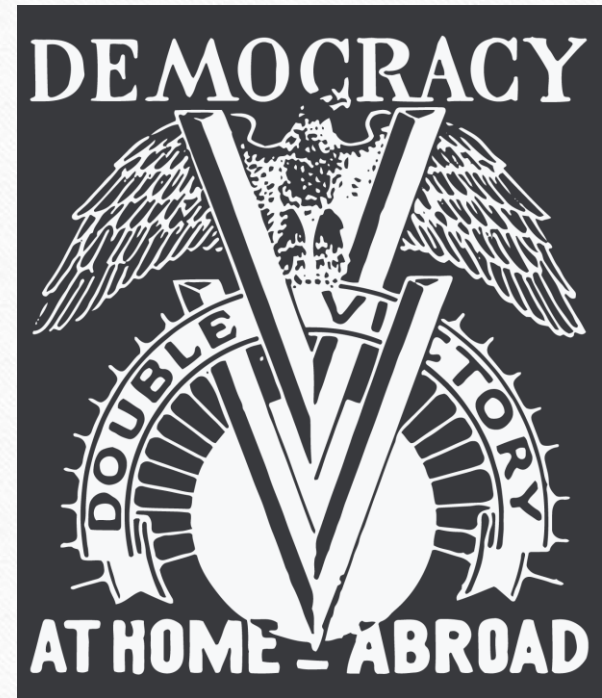
\*TROTTER, JOE W. "African Americans, Impact of the Great Depression on." *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression*. Ed. Robert S. McElvaine. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. 8-17. *U.S. History in Context*. Web. 19 Feb. 2016.



# Detroit Race Riots, 1943

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In 1943, a horrifying race riot took place in Detroit, Michigan. The city was in turmoil because tens of thousands of African-American workers had arrived to support the War Industries Board's productivity; however, the white residents of the region were unwilling to accept African-Americans as neighbors and co-workers. Over three days, close to three dozen people were killed – 25 of whom were African-Americans and most of whom were killed by police officers. After this riot took place, black Americans started the Double V Movement: Victory over Fascism Abroad and Victory over Racism at home!





# 1945: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 1945. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.



# The Civil Rights Movement Engenders Changes in America, 1945 - 1965

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- In 1908, in response to a race riot in Springfield, IL, the NAACP was founded by over a dozen co-sponsors, including W.E.B. DuBois.
- In 1948, Harry Truman desegregated the United States Armed forces. Civil Rights Leader Asa Philip Randolph had fought bravely for this change.
- In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation was illegal in the case of *Brown V. Board of Education, Topeka, KS*.
- President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law in response to the massive protests of the Civil Rights Movement. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's famous "I Have A Dream" speech was a prime motivator of this progressive law.
- In 1965, the Voting Rights Act was signed into law in order to ensure the voting rights of all African-Americans. The Selma March – which resulted in horrific police brutality hurled upon peaceful African-American protestors – inspired many Americans to support changes to the voter registration process in America.



# Desegregation of the US Military

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- In 1948, President Harry S Truman made the momentous decision to completely integrate the United States military. Previously, black units had been segregated and forced to serve under white commanders. Now, every aspect of the military would be desegregated. Black and white soldiers would serve side by side, and African-Americans would be allowed to take leadership positions which they had earned. Promotions would be based on merit, not race.





# The Supreme Court Case of *Brown V. Board of Education, Topeka, KS* (1954)

- *Brown V. Board of Education* was the Supreme Court case which changed everything in the United States. Argued by Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP and presented to the SCOTUS led by Chief Justice Earl Warren, the court issued a unanimous decision which banned segregation in public schools across America. Warren wrote that schools must be integrated with “all deliberate speed,” and most Americans understood that this ruling regarding education would have widespread implications. Other public institutions must be integrated as well!





# Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" Speech – August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1963

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Martin Luther King delivered his most famous oration at the "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom," a march which Asa Philip Randolph had hoped to complete for decades. King's speech, at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, was one of the pinnacle achievements of his distinguished career at the time, and he was called to the White House to meet with President Kennedy later in the day, to give input regarding the legislation which would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The speech, though, was given during a difficult time during the Civil Rights Movement and a difficult time for America. Weeks before, King had been imprisoned in Birmingham, AL, as protesters of segregation were the victims of police brutality in the city. Two weeks after the March on Washington, four little girls were murdered by a bombing at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in the Birmingham. Kennedy, meanwhile, would be murdered in November of 1963, never living to see the day when the Civil Right Act was signed into law.





# The Civil Rights Act of 1964

- In 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. This law forbid discrimination with regards to race, religion, and sex – and it would open everything from colleges and universities to jobs in the private sector to African-Americans, women, and other minority groups. Local governments, schools and businesses would no longer be allowed to discriminate against people based on their race, religion, or sex. The law was strictly enforced and had strong support.





# The Voting Rights Act of 1965

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Even after the Civil Rights Act was passed, voter registration in Southern States remain almost impossible of African-Americans. Poll taxes, literacy tests, and threats of violence prevented African-American men and women from voting until the passage of the Voting Rights Act. Now, in places where discrimination had been practiced for decades, the federal government was put in charge of determining who would be eligible to vote. The Voting Rights Act resulted in a virtual doubling of African Americans on the voter rolls.





# 1965: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 1896. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.



# *To The Present, Civil Rights in America, 2016*

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In 2008, Barack Obama became the first African-American President in United States history. He was re-elected in 2012, and when he ascended to the Presidency, there was hopeful talk of a “post-racial” America. Civil Rights concerns, however, persist in America.

Condaleeza Rice and Colin Powell both served as Secretary of State under President George W. Bush... Justice Clarence Thomas currently sits upon the United States Supreme Court.

In June of 2013, the Supreme Court’s decision in *Shelby County V. Holder* gutted the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Voter ID laws have created a modern day poll tax, preventing low income and urban voters – many of whom are African-American or from other minority groups – from voting. Almost 35% of the 4 Million voters who are disenfranchised as felons are African-American men.

Today, nearly 1 Million African-Americans are in prison. Black men are six (6) times more likely than white men to end up in jail. One in six African-American men has been in prison.

In 2012, the killing of Trayvon Martin by self-appointed neighborhood watchman George Zimmerman focused the nation on the frequent murder of young black men. The Black Lives Matter movement was founded shortly thereafter. The issue of police brutality and officer involved shootings of African-Americans has become a major issue in the United States in the past four years. Police involved shootings or killings of Michael Brown of Ferguson, MO; Walter Scott of North Charleston, SC; Tamir Rice of Cleveland, OH; Eric Gardner of New York, NY; Freddie Gray of Baltimore, MD, and more recently Laquan McDonald in Chicago, IL have resulted in massive demonstrations against police brutality.



# President Barack Obama

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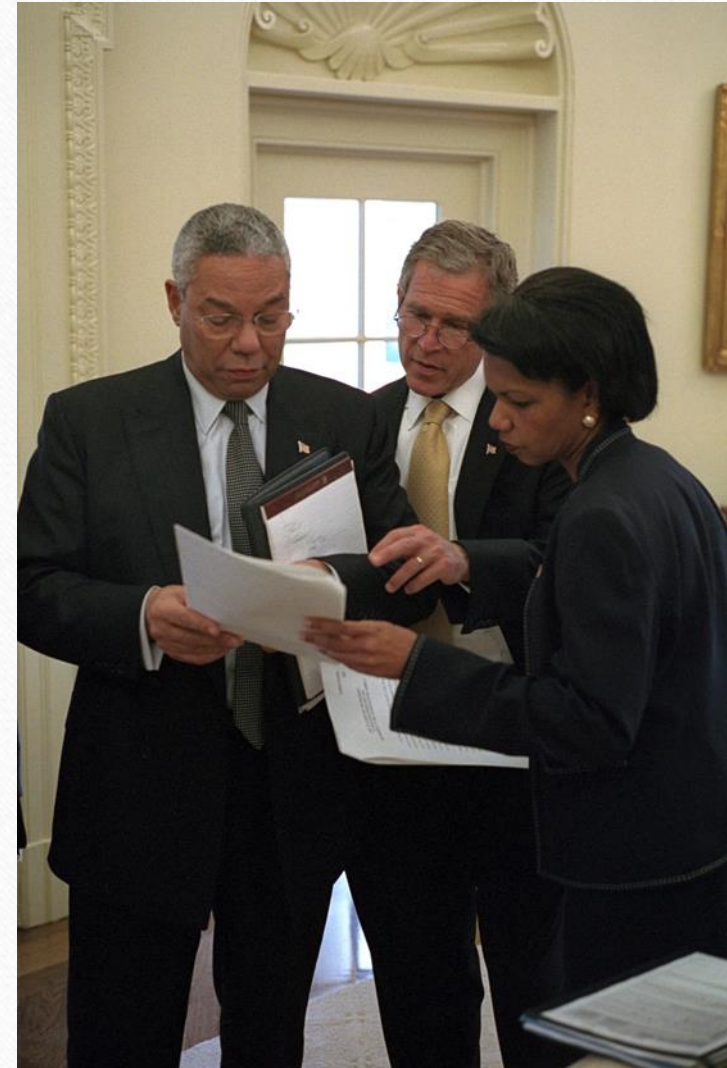
President Barack Obama was elected in 2008, and became the first African-American President in our nation's history. He was re-elected in 2012. Although many heralded his election in 2008 as the beginning of a post-racial America, the problem of maintaining equality under the law and racial harmony has proven to be elusive. Many have interpreted the obstructive stances of Republicans in Congress to the President's policies as racially motivated – just as many felt that the “birther” movement was a suggestion that a black American was not quite “American” enough.



# *African-Americans in Key Leadership Roles*

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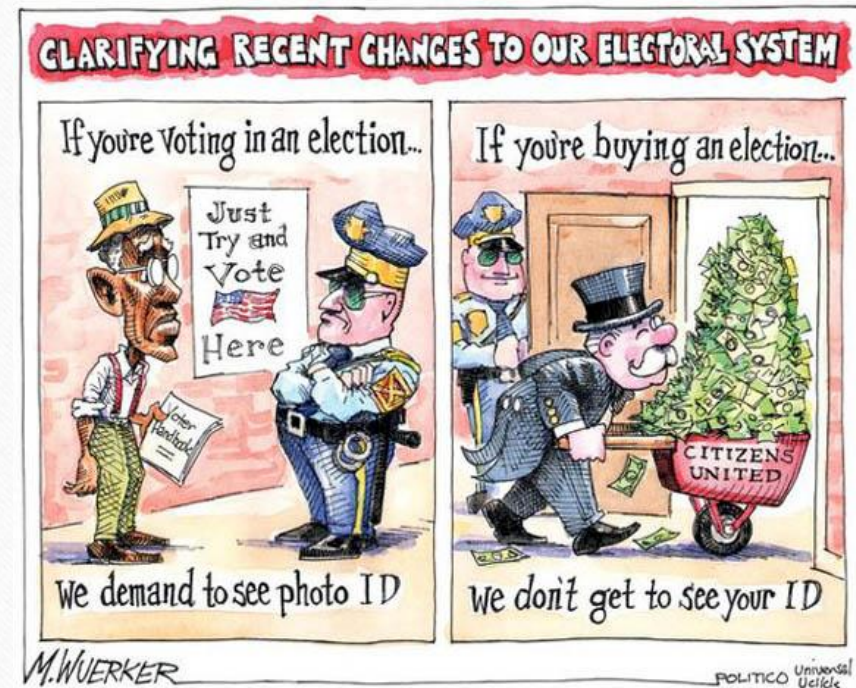
During the 1990 and at the onset of the 21st Century, many African-Americans were appointed to important positions in the national government – leadership positions which had rarely been offered to African-American candidates. Under George H.W. Bush, for example, Justice Clarence Thomas was appointed to the Supreme Court. Under George W. Bush, both Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice served as Secretary of State. More recently under President Obama, Eric Holder was appointed as Attorney General, and Loretta Lynch succeeded him when he stepped down last year. Additionally, far more African-Americans have been elected to Congress or state and local offices in the past thirty years than in previous generations. Surely, this is a sign of progress with regards to American race relations and racial harmony.





# The Case of *Shelby County V. Holder* (2013)

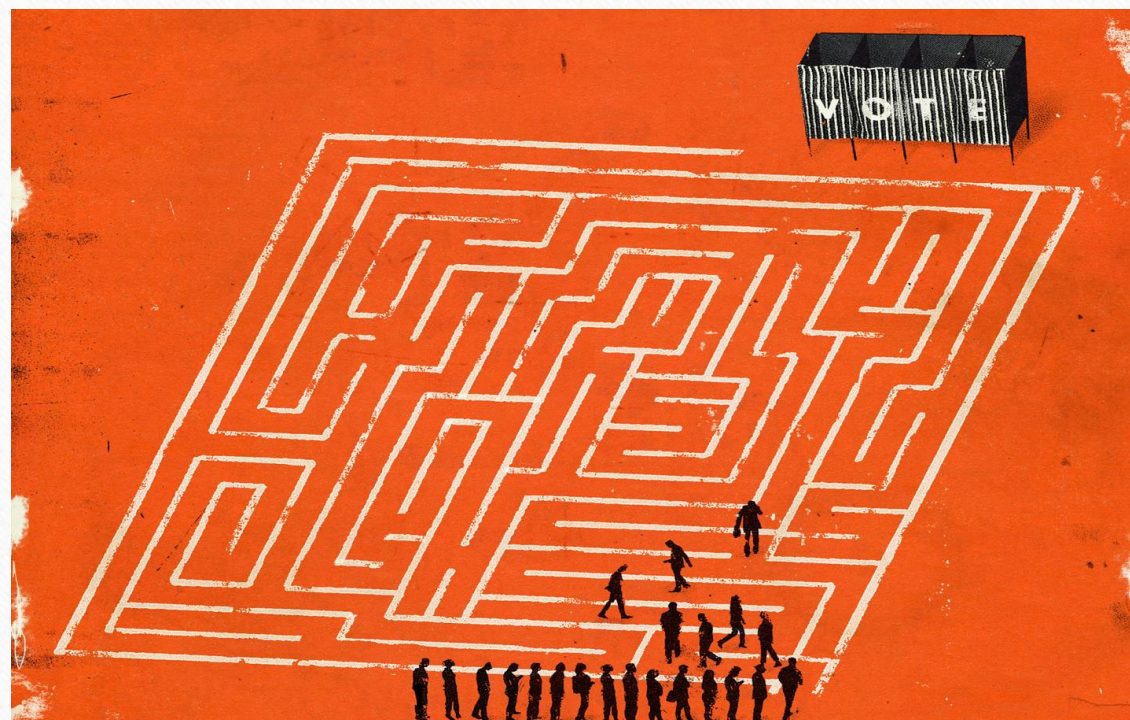
In the case of *Shelby County V. Eric Holder* in 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that the United States no longer discriminated against African-American voters with enough regularity to justify the enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1965 in all states and counties where it was the law of the land. Yet, many Americans contend that by limiting access to the polls and requiring voter ID cards or licenses, a new set of obstacles have been created to prevent students, minorities and the urban poor from exercising their right to vote in many states.





# Disenfranchised Felons

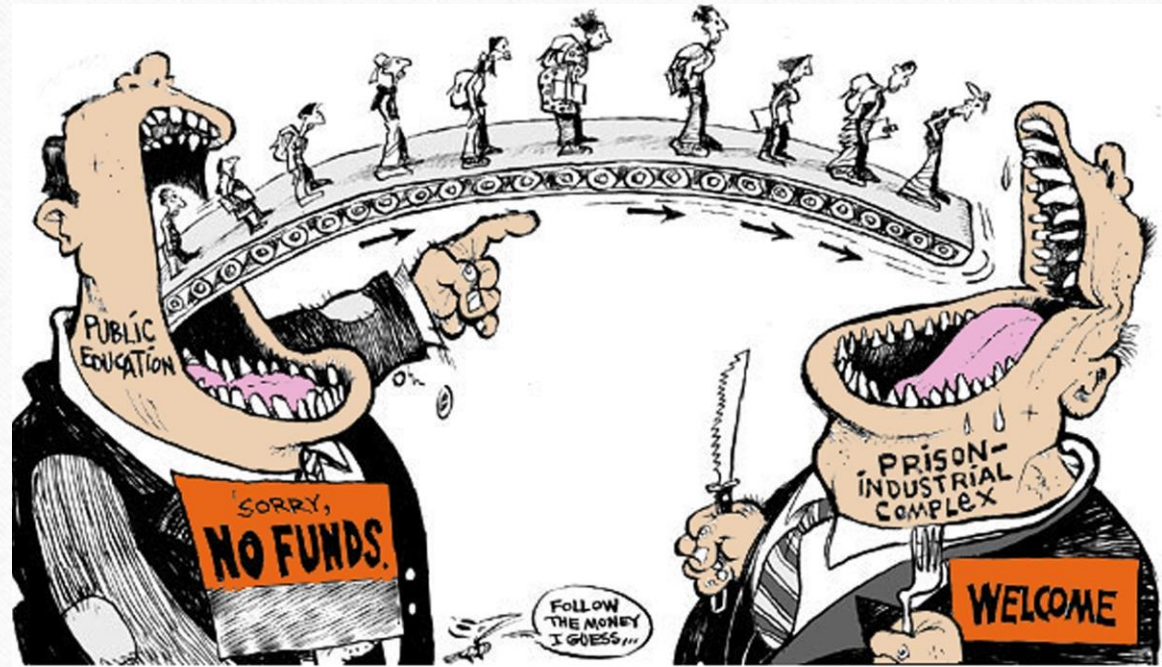
People convicted of felonies are generally forbidden to vote in future elections. Today, there are close to 4 Million Americans who have been disenfranchised because of felony convictions, and 35% or those individuals – approximately 1.4 Million – are African-Americans. State laws govern who can regain their suffrage rights, and Virginia recently provided a pathway to regaining suffrage rights for some felons under Bob McDonnell.





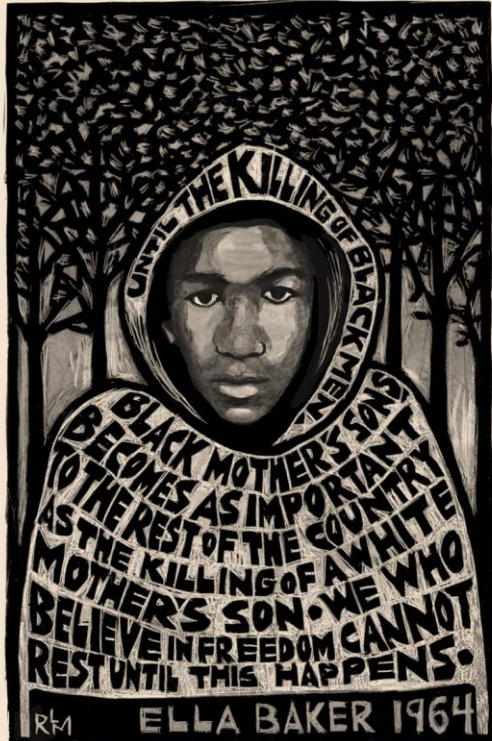
# Prison Reform

Twenty five percent of the men and women in prisons in the world today are Americans. African-American men make up close to one million of these individuals, and black men are six times more likely to be imprisoned than their white counterparts. Almost one in six African-Americans today is in or has been in jail. Meanwhile, the profits made by the private prison industry in American today tops \$5 Billion dollars annually!





# “The Black Lives Matter” Movement



The “Black Lives Matter” Movement began in February of 2013, when Trayvon Martin was killed by a self-proclaimed neighborhood watchman – and no one was punished for his murder. Since then, the killings of African-Americans – particularly officer involved shootings – have become major flashpoints in American race relations. The “Black Lives Matter” movement, though, goes beyond calling people to speak out against racially motivated violence and asks all African-Americans “to affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, black-undocumented folks, folks with [criminal] records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. It centers those that have been marginalized within Black liberation movements. It is a tactic to (re)build the Black liberation movement.”\*

\*<http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>



# 2016: Who won the Civil War?

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- Consider all of the events you can between the years 1850 and 2016. Then, answer the question above.
- Provide at least five (5) pieces of evidence which support your argument that either (a) the goals of the Union were satisfied or (b) the goals of the Union were not satisfied.